Learners- Who they are, what they know and what they don’t know

Who they are:

The learners for this workshop are seven teachers at St. Peter Lutheran School in Hemlock, Michigan. They range in experience from 3 years to 41 years. There are six females and one male (the principal). Six of the seven teachers have taught their entire careers at St. Peter. They are all open to new ideas, but have never had any training on wikis or their use in the classroom. They all have knowledge of computers to a certain extent and are willing to learn new skills and techniques to use in the classroom.

What they know and what they don’t know (the performance gap):

Last year, we had to shorten our school day due to our reliance on public school bussing. As a result, teachers have had to cut projects out of the curriculum simply because there was not enough time in the day to complete them. There is also a general lack of time for group and collaborative projects unless instruction time is given up. Teachers do not have a solution to this problem. They do not know how to have students work collaboratively in an online environment both within school and outside of school. Within school, multiple students can work on the same project on multiple computers at the same time. Outside of school, students can work on the same project at home and see the progress made by their partners. Teachers do not know that wikis can help to solve this problem. They also do not know the basics of wiki creating and editing, nor do they understand how to use them in their classroom. They do not have the skills or ideas at this point to implement them into the curriculum.

How this gap was identified:

A survey was distributed to the teachers at St. Peter. Six of seven teachers indicated that time in the classroom for class projects had declined since the schedule change. Seven out of seven indicated that they would like more time for class projects, but did not know how to do this. Seven out of seven know how to use Wikipedia, but only one had ever edited a wiki before. That one stated that it was a long time ago and they didn’t remember how to do it anymore. All seven teachers stated that they did not know how to create a wiki, edit a wiki, or use a wiki in their classroom.

Instructional Goals:

By the end of this workshop, learners will know how to create a wiki, edit a wiki, and understand how to utilize a wiki in their classroom. They will also create an implementation plan for their own classroom, which will include goals for when they want to first use wikis in their classrooms. This workshop will help change their minds about class projects and how to conduct them in their classroom. Projects can be worked on outside of the classroom as well, and teachers will recognize this idea and capitalize on it for their benefit and their students’ benefits.